

William McIlwaine House
214 Washington Street
Saltsburg
Indiana County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5424

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PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
Washington, DC 20013-7127

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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

WILLIAM McILWAINE HOUSE

HABS No. PA-5424

Location: 214 Washington St., Saltsburg, Conemaugh Township, Indiana County, Pennsylvania.

Present Owner: Jacob E. and Winifred Zeigler.

Present Use: Single-family residence.

Significance: As one of two remaining--and nearly identical--stone buildings in Saltsburg, 214 Washington St. reflects typical early-nineteenth-century Pennsylvania construction and the town's development as a commercial center dependent upon canal-then-rail transportation entities.

PART I. HISTORICAL INFORMATION

A. Physical History:

1. Date of erection: 1827-mid-1840s; the building was probably constructed by 1835, when tax records list the owner as having one house and two lots, without specifying which lot contained the dwelling; the second, adjacent lot includes a building that dates from 1840s, so the house noted in the deed may be this one.
2. Original and subsequent owners: The following is an incomplete chain of title to the land on which the structure stands, historically part of lot No. 24. Reference is to the Recorder of Deeds Office of the County of Indiana, Pennsylvania.

1827 Deed January 29, 1827, Volume 6, Page 244.

Joseph Harper

TO

John and Mary Elwood (no mention of building)

1844 Deed February 21, 1844, Volume 13, Page 131.

John and Mary Elwood

TO

William McIlwaine

1844 Deed March 27, 1844, Volume 13, Page 592.
David Ralston, Esq., High Sheriff
TO
Unknown

1883 Deed January 15, 1883, Volume A45, Page 424.
William McIlwain and wife
TO
David Kenley

1932 Deed February 4, 1932, Volume 261, Page 290.
Millie Dunlap, et al. (heirs of David Kenley)
TO
Ivaneita L. Martin

3. Original plans and construction: No original plans or drawings have been located, however it appears that little alteration has been made to the five-bay, two-story, stone dwelling.
4. Alterations and additions: The one-story, gable-roofed wing at the west end of the rear facade was erected prior to 1886, when it also featured a wood porch.

- B. Historical Context: The land on which the house at 214 Washington St. sits was part of a 1788 land patent to Hugh and Thomas Wilson. It was probably built as the home and canal-side general store of William McIlwain (born 1799). One of several of his warehouses was located in the rear yard. He is listed in tax records as a merchant and occasionally a banker, with an annual income varying from \$150 to \$250.

McIlwain's family emigrated from Ireland to Philadelphia in 1821, then moved to Salem Township in Westmoreland County and began farming. William McIlwain moved to Baltimore two years later and served as a store clerk before moving on to Pittsburgh in 1826 to become a senior member of McIlwain and Company, grocery/produce dealers. In 1831 he joined his brother Robert, who had moved to Saltsburg the previous year, and undertaken the "general mercantile business." This career lasted about 44 years, and he is credited as having been "a quiet businessman" who "aided materially" in developing the town.

McIlwain was twice married and had three children. He was an elder in the Presbyterian church for more than 39 years, and he served as an officer on the board of Edgewood Cemetery, the Presbyterian burial ground east of Saltsburg. McIlwain was also the first treasurer of the Saltsburg Bridge Company, and later its president. He and other members of the family owned several other properties in Saltsburg, including 202 Point St., which was owned by a later William McIlwain, most likely his son.

For additional context, twenty-one reports on other buildings in Saltsburg may be consulted, as well as overview histories of the town of Saltsburg (HABS No. PA-5438) and of canal town development in Pennsylvania (HABS No. PA-5666). See also, Sara Amy Leach, ed., Two Historic Pennsylvania Canal Towns: Alexandria and Saltsburg (Washington, DC: Historica American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, March 1989).

PART II. ARCHITECTURAL INFORMATION

A. General Statement:

1. Architectural character: This substantial-yet-simple five-bay, side-gable stone dwelling represents traditional, early-nineteenth-century vernacular Pennsylvania construction.
2. Condition of fabric: Good.

B. Description of Exterior:

1. Overall dimensions: About 40' x 20'; the frame ell about 20' x 20' (Sanborns).
2. Foundation: Stone.
3. Walls: Dressed stone blocks and corner quoins; rear addition is frame.
4. Structural system: Load-bearing stone and frame.
5. Chimneys: Two interior brick chimneys, at each gable end.
6. Openings:

- a. Doorways and doors: Low-relief, plain door surround with modern aluminum awning; this obscures a transom, shallow pediment, and wood lintel. The single, nine-light glazed door and aluminum storm door are both modern.
 - b. Windows: Consistent two-over-two-light double-hung wood sash on the first floor and the five-bays of the second floor; the latter are the same width, but shorter than those in the four window bays of the first level.
7. Roof: Side gable with asphalt shingles.
- C. Site: The building faces north to Washington Street and the site of the second railroad depot, and is one lot east of the canal right of way. To the east is a fully developed block of mostly canal-related structures.

PART III. SOURCES OF INFORMATION

A. Old Views and maps:

The collection of the Saltsburg Branch, Historical and Genealogical Society of Indiana County, Stone House Museum, contains numerous historical images.

Beers, F.W. Atlas of Indiana County. New York: F.W. Beers and Co., 1871.

Johnson, George B., and Palmer, Ann. Saltsburg--The Way It Was--An Appreciation. Indiana, Pa.: A.G. Halldin Publishing Co., 1986.

Peelor, David, and Barker, W. "Map of Indiana County, Pennsylvania." North Hector, New York: 1856.

"Saltsburg, Pa." New York: Sanborn Map and Publishing Co. Ltd., February 1886; New York: Sanborn-Perris Map Co. Ltd., October 1891, January 1897, July 1903; New York: Sanborn Map Company, April 1909, February 1927.

B. Primary and unpublished sources:

Indiana County, Pennsylvania, deed books and tax records.

C. Secondary and published sources:

Arms, C.T., and White, E. 1745-1880, History of Indiana County, Pennsylvania. Newark, Ohio: J. A. Caldwell, 1880.

Berringer, Gloria, ed. Canal Days Sesquicentennial: 1838-1988. No publisher, 1988.

Biographical and Historical Cyclopedia of Indiana and Armstrong Counties. Philadelphia: John M. Gresham and Co., 1891; reprinted 1982.

Johnson, George. Saltsburg and the Pennsylvania Canal. Historic Saltsburg, 1984.

McCullough, Robert, and Leuba, Walter. The Pennsylvania Main Line Canal. York, Pa.: American Canal and Transportation Center, 1973.

National Register of Historic Places Inventory, "Western Division of the Pennsylvania Canal: Indiana and Westmoreland Counties." 1979/82.

Stewart, J.T. Indiana County, Pennsylvania: Her People, Past and Present. Chicago: F.W. Beers and Co., 1913.

Wallner, Peter A. "Politics and Public Works: A Study of the Pennsylvania Canal System, 1825-1857." Ph.D diss., Pennsylvania State University, June 1973.

PART IV. PROJECT INFORMATION

This project was conducted by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record in cooperation with the America's Industrial Heritage Project under the directorship of Randy Cooley; AIHP is an undertaking of the National Park Service, based in Hollidaysburg, Pennsylvania. Recorded under the direction of Robert J. Kapsch, chief of HABS/HAER, the project was completed during summer 1988 at the HABS field office in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. Project leader was Alison K. Hoagland, senior HABS historian; field supervisor was Dorothy Burlingame, University of Vermont; project historian, Kristin Belz, University of Virginia. Large-format photography is by David Ames. Editing of the final report was done by Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.

This report was completed as part of a larger project documenting two canal towns--Saltsburg, on the Western Division of the Pennsylvania Mainline Canal, and Alexandria, on the Juniata Division--flanking the Allegheny Divide. Twenty-one

reports on other buildings in Saltsburg, an overview history of Saltsburg (HABS No. PA-5438), and of canal town development in Pennsylvania (HABS No. PA-5666) are part of the HABS/HAER collection. Twenty-two reports on buildings in Alexandria (Huntingdon County) and an overview history of Alexandria (HABS No. PA-5407) are also available. Results of the project were published as Two Historic Pennsylvania Canal Towns: Alexandria and Saltsburg, Sara Amy Leach, editor (Washington, DC: Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record, National Park Service, March 1989).